

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 10054

To withdraw certain Federal land in the Rio Chama Watershed area of the State of New Mexico from mineral entry, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 6, 2026

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To withdraw certain Federal land in the Rio Chama Watershed area of the State of New Mexico from mineral entry, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Chama Basin Water-
5 shed Protection Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. WITHDRAWAL OF FEDERAL LAND IN RIO CHAMA**
7 **WATERSHED AREA, NEW MEXICO.**

8 (a) WITHDRAWAL.—The Federal land located within
9 the boundary area depicted as “Rio Chama Watershed”
10 on the map entitled “Rio Chama Watershed Draft” and

1 dated April 22, 2026, is withdrawn from all forms of loca-
2 tion, entry, and patent under the mining laws.

3 (b) EFFECT ON NON-FEDERAL MINERAL INTER-
4 ESTS.—The withdrawal described in subsection (a) applies
5 only to minerals owned by the United States and nothing
6 in this Act affects, diminishes, impairs, encumbers, or oth-
7 erwise applies to any right, title, interest, or claim in min-
8 erals owned by, held in trust on behalf of, or claimed by—

9 (1) a qualified land grant-merced; or

10 (2) an Indian Tribe.

11 (c) EFFECT ON TRADITIONAL AND CUSTOMARY
12 USES.—Nothing in this Act prohibits, restricts, or other-
13 wise affects the traditional, customary, or personal use,
14 gathering, or collection of common variety minerals, stone,
15 sand, gravel, clay, adobe, mineral earths, or other similar
16 materials by members of a qualified land grant-merced or
17 acequia community, or by other individuals, for domestic,
18 cultural, religious, ceremonial, subsistence, agricultural, or
19 noncommercial construction purposes, consistent with ap-
20 plicable Federal law and the management of the National
21 Forest System.

22 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

23 (1) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
24 means the governing body of any individually identi-
25 fied and federally recognized Indian or Alaska Na-

1 tive tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, community,
2 affiliated Tribal group, or component reservation in-
3 cluded on the most recent list published pursuant to
4 section 104(a) of the Federally Recognized Indian
5 Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131(a)).

6 (2) QUALIFIED LAND GRANT-MERCED.—The
7 term “qualified land grant-merced” means a com-
8 munity land grant issued under the laws or customs
9 of the Government of Spain or Mexico that—

10 (A) is recognized under New Mexico Stat-
11 utes Chapter 49, Articles 1 and 4 (or a suc-
12 cessor statute); and

13 (B)(i) has a record of historical or tradi-
14 tional use on Federal land within the boundary
15 area described in subsection (a); or

16 (ii) has a patented exterior boundary that
17 is or previously was located on or adjacent to
18 Federal land within the boundary area de-
19 scribed in subsection (a).

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